

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action of December 19, 2005 in which the Examiner rejected certain claims over Tassoni U.S. Pat. No. 4,615,146 in view of Caton U.S. Pat. No. 2,948,087.

The Examiner's rejection of the claims is respectfully traversed for the reasons set forth below.

The art cited by the Examiner is different than the invention in a number of ways. In the first instance, both references disclose smoothing machines in which the smoothing unit rotates about two axes. In Tassoni, the smoothing unit rotates about a horizontal axis and a parallel vertical axes. In Caton, each brush rotates about a central axis and a parallel brush axis. Both references move the abrasive elements in a circular planetary-like motion.

The present invention as set forth in amended claim 1 employs a winding element that carries abrasive elements in opposite parallel paths transverse to the direction of movement of the workpiece. While the end portions of the winding element move about the vertical axes of the pulleys, the abrasives engage the workpiece in parallel linear paths. In other words, the references move the abrasive elements in circular paths while engaging the work and the invention moves the abrasives in linear paths.

An advantage of the arrangement of the invention is to allow the device to process small workpieces without shifting problems. The abrasive elements press the workpiece down against the belt. In the references the workpiece is subject to twisting force, whereas in the invention, the workpiece is not twisted.

Another advantage of the invention is that each abrasive element is not rotated on the axis of the shaft securing it to the belt or winding element. Accordingly, the workpiece is worked in a manner that improves smoothing around the edges by motion of the inclined abrasive elements transverse of the workpiece.

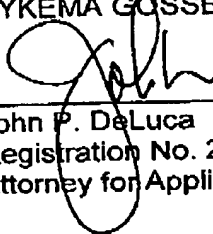
The claims have been amended in order to emphasize these features and to more clearly distinguish the invention from the cited art. The claims emphasize the transverse motion of the abrasive elements along parallel paths in opposite directions, and the orientation of the abrasive elements relative to the winding element. It is believed that the references cited by the Examiner do not show or

suggest the arrangement of the invention, particularly since the invention operates in parallel paths, whereas the art operates in circular paths.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider his rejection of the claims, the allowance of which is earnestly solicited.

It is believed that no additional fees are required. However, if an additional fee is required, the Director is authorized to charge deposit account 04-2223 or credit any overpayment thereto.

Respectfully submitted,
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